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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

June 18, 2004

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ROMNEY ADMINISTRATION PUSHES FOR \$9.7 MILLION IN BRIDGE AND BEACH IMPROVEMENTS FOR LYNN AND WINTHROP

REVERE - Environmental Affairs Secretary Ellen Herzfelder and Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) Commissioner Kathy Abbott kicked off the summer recreation season at Revere Beach today and touted a plan to spend nearly \$10 million on additional infrastructure and recreation improvements in Lynn and Winthrop.

Earlier this month Governor Mitt Romney proposed spending a part of the state's \$500 million fiscal 2004 budget surplus to increase the quality of life in communities throughout Massachusetts.

Romney's proposal would send \$100 million to cities and towns in the form of additional local aid and set aside \$254 million for one-time capital improvements across the state, including upgrades to roads and bridges and renovations to state recreation facilities such as parks, swimming pools and beaches. Romney proposed spending \$3.7 million to fix the General Edwards Bridge in Lynn and \$6 million for the Winthrop Beach Reservation Rehabilitation Project.

"The Romney Administration is committed to maintaining and improving the tremendous recreational infrastructure that makes Massachusetts such a great place to live and raise a family," said Herzfelder. "Right now we have a unique opportunity to make life better for the residents of this community, for commuters who depend on the bridges and parkways, and for the thousands of people who come here to enjoy our wonderful beaches; we should seize this opportunity."

Herzfelder said the Governor's plan would allow DCR to proceed with needed improvements to the four-lane General Edwards Bridge on the Lynnway. A principal gateway to the North Shore, the General Edwards Bridge serves 30,000 motorists per day and was last rehabilitated in 1989. 15 years of wear and tear have taken their toll, and the bridge is in need major improvements. Potential upgrades include:

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- Modernizing the drawbridge's electrical control system;
- Replacing four deteriorated concrete counterweights, allowing the drawbridge's continued operation.

DCR Commissioner Abbott said Romney's spending plan also allocated \$6 million for the rehabilitation of Winthrop Beach Reservation. The project is currently in the environmental review and permitting process and she said DCR is committed to moving ahead with the project. If funding were approved by the Legislature, it would not count towards DCR's "bond cap," a mandated spending ceiling the agency cannot exceed. This makes the project more likely to proceed.

"The 'Back to the Beaches' program has a track record of success that we want to continue in Winthrop," said Abbott. "I'd love to be able to put our plans in motion for the people of this community."

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